

# Whitleigh Community Primary School

Lancaster gardens, Whitleigh, Plymouth, PL5 4AA

**Inspection dates** 8–9 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement is good and improving. Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress is strongest in the upper end of Key Stage 2.
- Leaders and the governing body are relentless in their pursuit of improvement. Development, over the past year, in the way that letters and their sounds (phonics) are taught is helping pupils to accelerate their progress in reading and writing.
- The promotion of individual reading is highly successful. Pupils read a wide range of books and check their understanding of what they have read using an online assessment. The school is successfully fostering a love of reading.
- Pupils are proud of their school and keen to do well. They are polite and respectful towards each other and say they feel safe in school and free from bullying.
- Relationships are very positive and pupils' individual needs are known well by their teachers and other adults. Teachers manage classes well and learning in lessons is purposeful. Pupils discuss their ideas together regularly to help them to widen their vocabulary and clarify their thinking.
- Leaders and governors have established high levels of support for teachers, for example through coaching in groups of three to help them to improve their teaching. New initiatives are backed up with good-quality training.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Improvements in the teaching of letters and their sounds to help with reading and writing are not fully embedded and more remains to be done to improve attainment in Key Stage 1.
- Opportunities for pupils to work by themselves are not always promoted well enough. They do not work enough in small groups without close direction from staff.
- Pupils' use of targets in lessons, so that they can identify for themselves how to improve their work, is not effective enough.

## Information about this inspection

- Twenty two lessons were observed, of which four were joint observations with members of the leadership team. Inspectors also observed playtimes and an assembly.
- Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils.
- Inspectors analysed questionnaires from 34 staff.
- Inspectors took account of the six responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and information from the school's recent survey of parents' and carers' opinions. Parents' and carers' views were sought at the start and end of the school day.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents, including: improvement plans, monitoring documentation, records relating to attendance, the school's information on pupils' progress and samples of pupils' work.
- A monitoring letter written in January 2012 was taken into consideration by the inspectors.

## Inspection team

Peter Clifton, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Teresa Hill	Additional inspector
Christine Taylor	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school with 15 classes.
- Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The proportion supported through school action is above average.
- Nearly one third of pupils are supported by the pupil premium (extra funding for some pupils); this is above average.
- Since the previous inspection, the school's governing body has been restructured. It is now a management committee within the federation of schools that is the Woodview Learning Community. Three schools share the same campus.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that learning is outstanding in a higher proportion of lessons by:
  - making sure that pupils can be more involved in identifying for themselves how well they have done and set their own targets to improve their work
  - providing more extended opportunities for pupils to work on their own or together in groups, including activities where they can direct their own learning.
- Raise attainment in reading and writing more quickly at Key Stage 1 by embedding changes introduced to improve pupils' understanding and use of letters and their sounds.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with skills that are well below age-related expectations. Additional resources, from pupil premium funding, is boosting communication by having more adults interacting with children. In the Nursery and Reception, good use of questioning and modelling of language helped children to extend their vocabulary. For example, Reception children were prompted to talk about caterpillars in the leaves and wood area. Nursery children were helped to count to 10 when they joined in with a firework song. While children make good progress, their language, communication and number skills remain below average by the time they enter Year 1.
- For some time, attainment by the end of Year 2 has been below average. The trend of improvement, since the last inspection report, has been stronger in mathematics than in reading and writing. To combat this, the school has introduced changes to the way letters and their sounds are taught, including additional resources, using pupil premium funding. This is accelerating progress in both Year 1 and 2. However, these changes are not fully embedded to raise attainment, so that it is at least securely average by the end of Year 2. The proportions of pupils in Year 2 on track to reach the expected and higher levels are better than those in 2012 for both reading and writing.
- Lower-attaining readers, in Year 2, use letters and their sounds well to help them read unknown words. However, lower-attaining pupils in Year 1 are less secure in using letter sounds. Pupil premium funding has been used to boost basic number skills in mathematics for some Year 2 pupils and this has accelerated their progress.
- Smaller-than-usual classes in Years 5 and 6 have been sustained with the help of pupil premium funding and this has helped to accelerate pupils' progress. In 2012, Year 6 pupils reached above average attainment in English and mathematics. These pupils made good progress in mathematics and writing, and excellent progress in reading. In all three areas, pupils made better progress than is found nationally.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are developed well in Key Stage 2. Year 5 pupils made outstanding progress when they used emotive language to describe the evacuation of London during the Second World War. Pupils read widely and often.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. They are given additional support to help them with their work, for example when using sounds to help spell simple words and write sentences with punctuation. The school's records show that nearly all of these pupils are on track to meet challenging targets.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good and some is outstanding. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. Teachers and support staff motivate the pupils to do their best and this results in good and sometimes outstanding learning.
- In lessons, talk is used well to help pupils to express their ideas. Questioning by teachers probes pupils' understanding. Pupils are urged to respond using full sentences and explore new vocabulary. In a lesson to improve sentence writing in Year 1, the teacher used a text to encourage the use of adventurous words such as 'scavenging' to describe seagulls.
- Learning typically moves at a brisk pace because lessons are well planned and delivered. Sequences of lessons build well on each other. However, there are times when learning slows, such as when pupils finish individual or group tasks and then wait for further instructions. This occurs occasionally when activities given are too short and because pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to work on their own for sustained periods.
- Pupils have information about how to improve their work. Marking consistently identifies aspects that are successful (stars) and what could be improved (wishes). Pupils refer to these stars and

wishes to help them to improve. However, there is not sufficient guidance for them to identify for themselves what they need to do to reach the next level. Consequently, they cannot judge with sufficient clarity how well they have done or determine their own next steps for improvement.

- Teaching assistants provide valuable support to different groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those supported by additional funding. In lessons, additional support helped Year 6 pupils, for example, to find different ways of solving problems, and to record their results.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils typically show respect towards each other and are well mannered and friendly. They enjoy playing together at break times. Older pupils take on responsibilities as play leaders and help to sort out any issues for themselves.
- In lessons, pupils respond quickly to any request made by the teacher and say that poor behaviour does not interrupt their learning. Groups of pupils work well together, commenting that they are happy in class and help each other. They much enjoy the challenge of the online reading assessment. However, they are not given enough opportunities to work by themselves to enable them to grow in confidence at setting their own tasks and challenges.
- Parents and carers, and staff, express the view that pupils' behaviour is a strength of the school. Discussions with pupils, and the school's logs, confirm that there is very little evidence of any serious misbehaviour or bullying and all feel safe. Pupils, and parents and carers, spoken to confirm that staff deal well with any incidents that occur.
- Displays of pupils' work and discussions show that they have been made acutely aware about e-safety and the possible dangers of the internet.
- There is a successful ongoing drive to increase regular attendance, for instance by praising the best-attending class during assemblies, and working with parents and carers to reduce the number of absences taken for holidays.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Since the last report and monitoring letter, leaders have successfully maintained a focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning in classes to ensure that it is consistently good.
- Teamwork is a strong feature in the school. Staff comment very positively about how well they have been supported by senior leaders, and about their pride in working in the school. This positive approach to teamwork makes a major contribution to the school's success, for example, through the coaching arrangements.
- Subject leaders have a good understanding of the school's priorities and their role in improving the quality of teaching. Strategies to encourage boys to write, a recent area for development, are well established.
- There is a rigorous system for measuring the progress of individual pupils as they move through the school so that any potential underachievement gets quick response. Leaders regularly check the performance of different groups of pupils. Pupil premium funding has been carefully targeted and evaluated, including the positive impact of the 'numbers count' programme.
- Learning in the subjects taught is well planned and links between different subjects make learning activities more interesting and relevant. Additional provision for those who are particularly able in mathematics utilises strong links with a partner school on the campus.
- The school helps pupils to deepen their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well. All pupils, irrespective of their social and ethnic backgrounds, have equal opportunity to do well and discrimination is not tolerated. Assemblies are used effectively to raise pupils' aspirations, including the value of individual reading.

- The support provided by the local authority has been effective in promoting improvement and self-reliance.

- **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because it is well informed about pupils' progress. Governors have been closely involved in ensuring that the pupil premium funding has been spent wisely and has helped pupils to improve their reading, writing and number skills. As an example, they have checked, for example, the progress made by the pupils who receive this additional funding in comparison to other groups in the school. The governing body receives good-quality information about the quality of teaching. It has ensured that those teachers who rise up the salary scale fulfil wider professional responsibilities. The governing body has committed additional funding to forge closer working relationships with parents and carers. The budget is closely monitored and spending decisions are evaluated. Governors ensure that safeguarding requirements are met. Governors are well trained including in the procedures to follow in order to recruit staff safely. They have a good understanding of new initiatives to improve pupils' reading and writing.
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## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	132215
<b>Local authority</b>	Plymouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	406480

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	385
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Vernon Pinches
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ian Cording
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1–2 December 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01752 706383
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